

### § 359.603

### 5 CFR Ch. I (1–1–04 Edition)

who is still serving a probationary period.

[54 FR 18876, May, 3, 1989, as amended at 60 FR 6388, Feb. 2, 1995]

#### § 359.603 OPM priority placement.

(a) *Agency certification.* (1) If there is no vacant SES position within the agency for which an appointee covered by § 359.602(b) is qualified, the agency head, or the acting agency head in the absence of the agency head, shall certify to OPM in writing that no such position is available. This certification may not be delegated below the Assistant Secretary level in a department, or an equivalent level above the director of personnel in other agencies.

(2) The 45-day period during which OPM will attempt to place the appointee begins on the day the certification is acknowledged by OPM.

(3) It is the continuing responsibility of an agency that has a surplus career appointee to place the appointee in any vacant SES position in the agency for which the appointee is qualified, even after the appointee is certified to OPM.

(4) An individual remains a career SES appointee in his or her agency during the OPM placement period.

(b) *OPM authority.* As provided by § U.S.C. 3595(b)(3), OPM may require an agency to take any action that OPM considers necessary to carry out a placement.

(c) *OPM referrals.* (1) OPM may formally refer a career appointee to an agency for a specific SES vacancy or general priority consideration. Such a referral may not become a part of the regular competitive staffing process. The appointee must be considered by the agency for a noncompetitive SES appointment.

(2) Any objection by the agency to the qualifications of the appointee must be based on the professional/technical qualifications in the standard for the position. An agency may not rely solely on lack of agency-specific experience for an objection based on lack of professional/technical qualifications if the appointee is otherwise qualified.

(d) *Agency response.* (1) In order to expedite placement of surplus career appointees, an agency shall respond to an OPM referral within the time period prescribed by OPM.

(2) If an agency fails to place a referred career appointee in an SES position because of objection to the appointee's qualifications or because of any other reason, the agency response must be in writing and must be signed by the agency head, or the acting agency head in the absence of the agency head. The response may not be delegated below the Assistant Secretary level in a department, or an equivalent level above the director of personnel in other agencies.

(3) If an agency cancels a position while a referral to the position is pending, the appointee will be entitled to priority consideration for the position if it or a successor position is reestablished in the SES within 1 year of the cancellation date and the appointee has not been placed in another SES position.

(e) *Corrective action.* If an agency fails to provide bona fide priority consideration, OPM may order appropriate corrective action.

(f) *Declination by employee.* If a career appointee declines a reasonable offer of placement, OPM's placement efforts will cease. The appointee may be removed from the SES at the expiration of the agency notice period.

[54 FR 18876, May, 3, 1989, as amended at 60 FR 6388, Feb. 2, 1995]

#### § 359.604 Removal from the SES and placement rights outside the SES.

(a) If a probationary appointee is identified for reduction in force under § 359.602(a), removal action is taken under § 359.405. Placement rights outside the SES are covered under subpart G of this part.

(b) If a career appointee who has completed the probationary period, or who did not have to serve one, is identified for reduction in force under § 359.602(a) and is not placed elsewhere in the SES under § 359.602(b) or § 359.603, or declines a placement offer under § 359.603, removal action is taken under § 359.604(b). Placement rights outside the SES are covered under subpart G of this part.

#### § 359.605 Notice requirements.

(a) Each career appointee subject to removal under § 359.604(b) is entitled to a specific, written notice at least 45